

AMERICA'S OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY PUBLISHED NEWSPAPER

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STARTING OVER

NEW SCHOOL, MADE FAMILIAR

Hundreds Of Volunteers Help Ease Transition For Sandy Hook Kids

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Sandy Hook Elementary School students will find that volunteers have painted the walls of their new school green and white, their school colors. The movers set furniture, desks, computers and supplies in the same places as their old classrooms in Newtown. Volunteers pinned the same posters to new classroom walls.

The re-creation of Sandy Hook Elementary at Chalk Hill School in Monroe involved hundreds of people over the past week. Locksmiths, plumbers, electricians, custodians, experts in fire suppression and security systems, as well as residents with paint brushes, all volunteered time to create an around-the-clock renovation team, which peaked at 500 workers.

Thanks to that effort, the surroundings will be

CHALK HILL, A4



WFSB | POOL

THE WELCOME sign is ready at Chalk Hill School in Monroe, where Sandy Hook students will begin classes Jan. 3.

As many as a half-dozen first-graders may have survived Adam Lanza's deadly shooting spree at Sandy Hook Elementary School because he stopped firing briefly, perhaps to reload his rifle or because it jammed, according to law enforcement officials familiar with the events.

A source said that the Bushmaster rifle that Lanza used in the shootings is at the state police forensic laboratory undergoing several tests, including tests to determine whether it jammed.

The children escaped from the first-grade classroom of teacher Victoria Soto, one of the six educators Lanza killed in Newtown after shooting his way through a glass door with the .223-caliber semiautomatic rifle on the morning of Dec. 14.

On Friday, detectives obtained and began examining records related to psychiatric care Lanza had received

RIFLE, A6



Rifle

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in an attempt to determine a motive. Several friends of his mother have said that he had Asperger's syndrome but authorities have neither confirmed that nor indicated it had anything to do with the shootings.

Lanza killed 27 people — 20 children, four teachers, the school principal, a school psychologist and his mother, Nancy — before shooting himself in the head as police began arriving at the school.

The arriving officers encountered a shocking scene in Son's classroom. Lanza had shot her, as well as special education teacher Anne Marie Murphy and six of Son's 6- and 7-year old students. Seven of Son's students were found huddled and unharmed in a classroom closet, apparently hidden by Son when she heard shooting. The other students fled the classroom.

Based on initial statements from surviving children and the fact that un-fired cartridges from Lanza's rifle were found on the ground, detectives suspect that some students were able to run to safety when Lanza stopped firing, probably for a short period of time, the officials said.

It is possible that Lanza, who reloaded the rifle frequently, mishandled or dropped a magazine and cartridges fell to the floor, they said.

But it also is possible, they said, that the mechanism that fed cartridges into the rifle jammed, causing Lanza to remove the magazine and clear the weapon. Un-fired cartridges could have fallen in the classroom floor during that process as well, law enforcement officials said.

The six children who escaped Lanza's rampage ran to a home a short distance from the school. Upon reaching the home, one of the boys told the owner that "we obeyed the rules, we stayed on the sidewalk," one of the officials said.

The authorities have hurried generally from the children who ran away, but something may have happened to Lanza's rifle that caused him to stop firing. The substance of the statements, which are not entirely consistent, is that a piece of the weapon, probably a magazine holding live cartridges, was dropped or fell to the classroom floor.

Investigators have decided not to formally interview the children, based on advice from Yale child psychologists. Given the chaotic nature of the scene, it is also possible that some children escaped while Lanza was shooting others.

State police are expected to wrap up work at the school and release the school as a crime scene in the next few days. They still are trying to determine how many shots Lanza fired.

Lanza killed himself in Son's classroom with one of the two pistols he carried into the building. He killed himself as police entered the building.

Police found a loaded 20-round shotgun in the trunk of the car similar to what is known as a "street sweeper." Police believe that Lanza didn't bring it into the school because he couldn't carry all of the weapons and ammunition. Lanza, who was about 6 feet tall, weighed barely 100 pounds, law enforcement sources said.

The few people who knew Lanza have portrayed him in the days since the mass shootings as an awkward, emotionally isolated, withdrawn young man. He attended public schools in Newtown, but at times was home-schooled by his mother, who was said by authorities and others to be the only person with whom he was socially engaged.

Lanza lived with his mother. He had two bedrooms and used one of them to keep computer equipment on which he is said to have enjoyed playing video games involving violent war games.

Before the shootings at the elementary school, Lanza shot his mother four times with a .22-caliber rifle as she lay in bed. He left the rifle at the house. All the

thunderous sound of Lanza blowing an opening big enough to walk through the locked school door caused Principal Dawn Hochsprung and school psychologist Mary Schertach to bolt from a nearby meeting room to investigate.

He shot and killed them both as they ran toward him. Two other staff workers in a meeting with Hochsprung and Schertach were injured in the hail of bullets but made it back inside the

conference room where one called 911 from under a table.

Lanza then turned toward the first classroom on his left, that of teacher Kathleen Roig. By then, authorities said, Roig had hidden with her students in a closet in her classroom. Before securing the closet door, which opened inward, authorities said she concealed the door behind a movable bookcase.

Lanza then walked past

Son's classroom into the third one, where Lanza Rousseau was teaching. He shot and killed Rousseau, special education teacher Rachel D'Amico and 14 students.

One member of the class was not killed, although it is not clear if the child escaped the shooting or was not in the room.

"I think the community is very much respecting their privacy," Newtown schools Superintendent Janet Robinson said of the student's family. "I think that everyone is very sensitive to what a horrific experience this 6-year-old... has been through."

Much later, after police had found Lanza's body and were searching for survivors, an officer had to slide a badge beneath the closet door before Roig could be persuaded to open it.

Coronat staff writer Matthew Shandament contributed to this story.

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